

Member of the Board of Camb YWCA speak to How important it is that Cambridge has committed to providing the family shelter units at Bigelow St., and is willing to continue to provide this essential source of temporary housing and services to homeless families.

Without this program, homeless families will either remain unhoused altogether or be forced to live in motel rooms, which are not a healthy setting for children and provide none of the services that a dislocated families need to deal with trauma of displacement, and to find and prepare for long-term housing.

State has made a concerted effort to provide family shelter facilities throughout the state, and keep families from motels and other risky situations, but it is still not able to keep up with the need for immediate shelter as new families become homeless. The provision Cambridge has made for these 10 shelter units is needed now and will continue to be needed.

We really appreciate the work that the city manager and Human services dept have put into addressing the immediate crisis and assuring that families to whom we already have a commitment can continue to be served. We will appreciate the council's support for this interim solution, and for the ongoing provision of safe shelter and services for families to whom it is so essential.